

## Chapter 4. Sign Restrictions and Controls

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### PURPOSE

The California Streets and Highways Code authorizes the Department of Transportation to accept funds, materials, equipment, or services from persons for roadside maintenance or enhancement. Caltrans recognizes donations made through the Adopt-A-Highway Program by identifying contributors via Adopt-Highway courtesy signs.

Courtesy signs also alert motorists and the California Highway Patrol that workers may be present. And, courtesy signs are the primary means of informing the public about the existence of the Adopt-A-Highway Program.

The Adopt-A-Highway Program and its courtesy signs are not a forum for advertisement or public discourse.

Courtesy signs will be provided, installed, and maintained by Caltrans for each project at no cost to the adopter.

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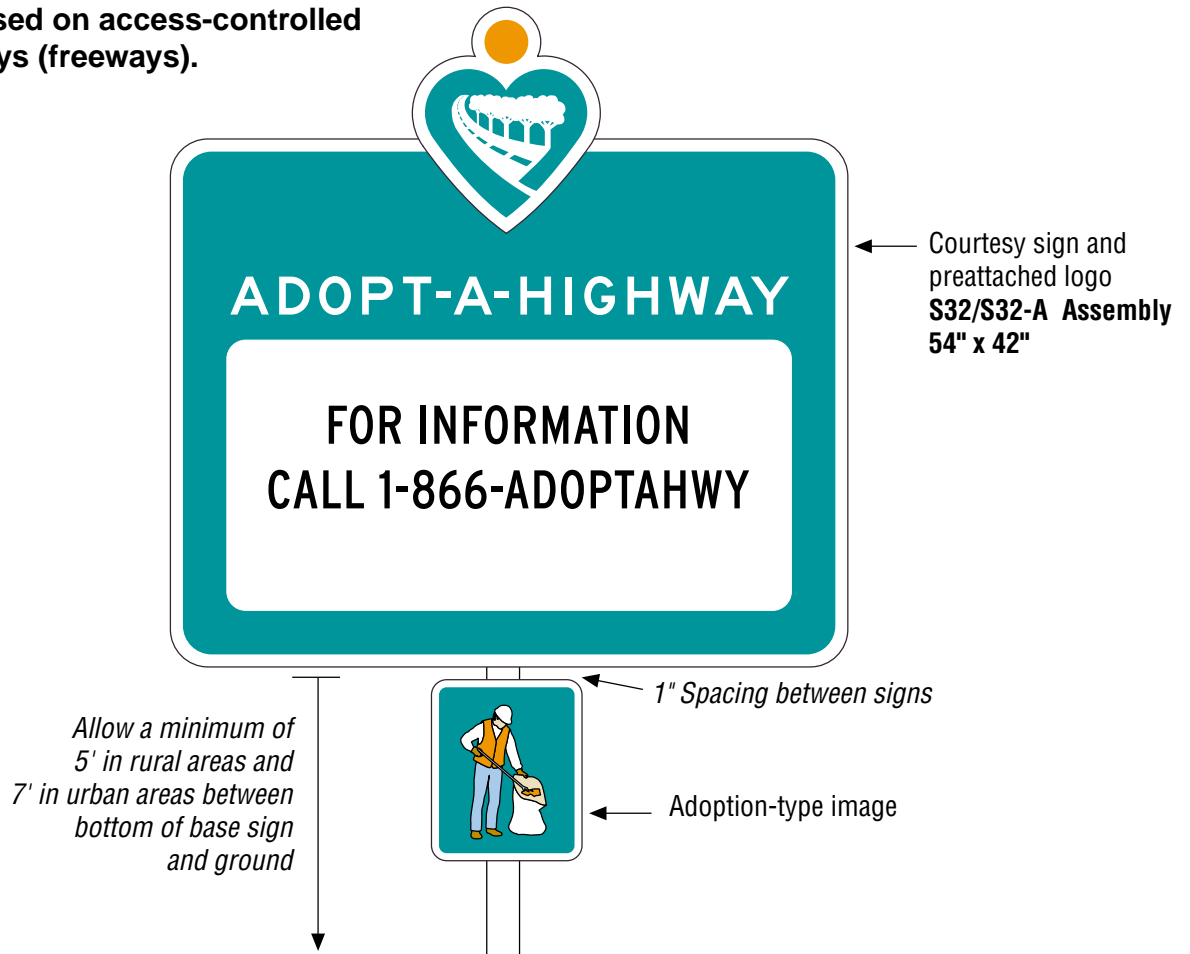
### DESCRIPTION OF SIGNS

Adopt-A-Highway courtesy signs are available in two sizes and consist of four pieces. The Adopt-A-Highway logo is attached to the base sign, while an icon depicting the adoption-type is displayed below the base sign. The fourth piece is the recognition panel, which is attached as an “overlay” to the front of the base sign. Sign components come predrilled with bolt holes and are assembled by Caltrans during installation. (See illustrations on page 4-2 and 4-3).

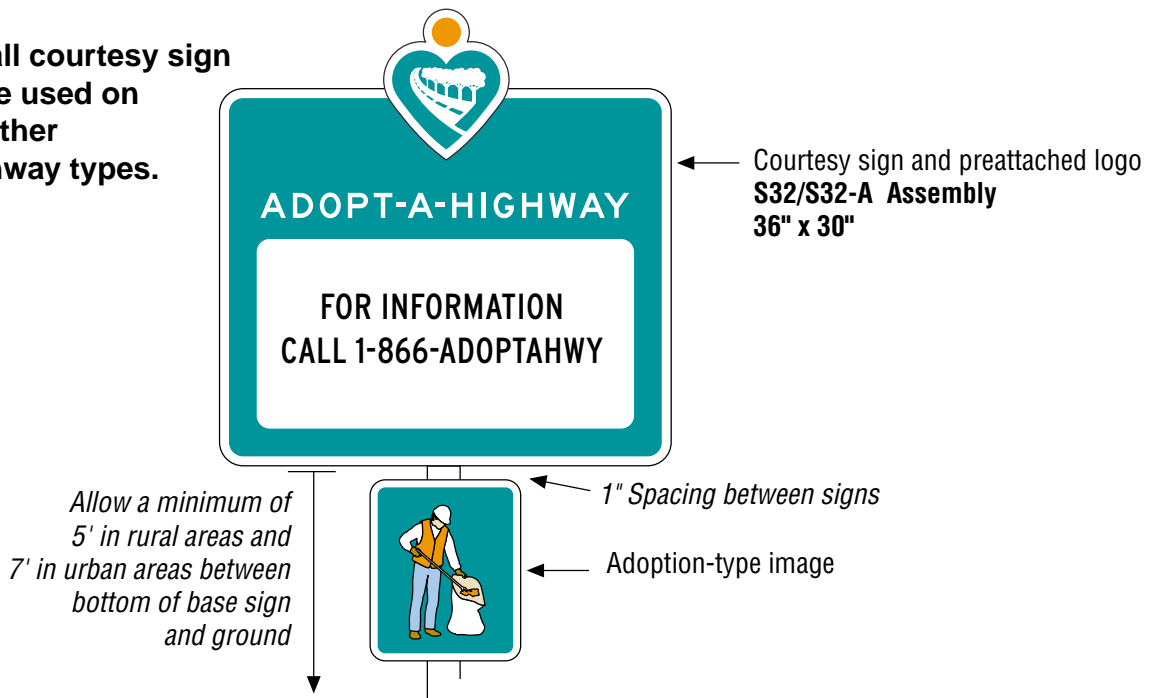
Beginning July, 2001, all signs purchased will ship with the Adopt-A-Highway logo riveted to the base sign and the program’s toll free number, 1-866-ADOPTAHWY, preprinted in black letters in the white area on the base sign.



**Large courtesy sign  
to be used on access-controlled  
highways (freeways).**



**Small courtesy sign  
to be used on  
all other  
highway types.**



## Adopt-A-Highway Sign Assembly



S32/S32-A Assembly  
54" x 42"



S32/S32-A Assembly  
36" x 30"

## Adopt-A-Highway Base Sign (For Replacement Purposes Only)



S32 54" x 42"



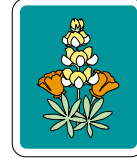
S32 36" x 30"

## Adoption-Type Icons

(Same Size Used For Both Base-Sign Sizes)



LITTER  
REMOVAL  
S32-1  
15" x 18"



WILDFLOWER  
PLANTING  
S32-2  
15" x 18"



TREE AND  
SHRUB PLANTING  
S32-3  
15" x 18"

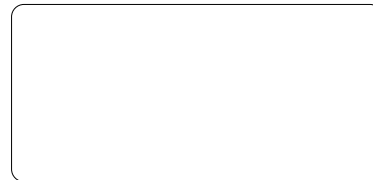


GRAFFITI  
CONTROL  
S32-4  
15" x 18"



VEGETATION  
CONTROL  
S32-5  
15" x 18"

## Recognition Panels



S32B 45" x 21"



S32B 30" x 15"

## Adopt-A-Highway Logo

(For Replacement Purposes Only)



S31-A 15" x 18"



S31-A 10" x 12"

**NOTE:** Mission Bell adoptions continue to use the old-style, S16-8 sign. Refer to Chapter 16 for more information.



## DETERMINING SIZE AND LOCATION OF SIGNS

Beginning in January, 2001, it became mandatory for old-style, Adopt-A-Highway courtesy signs to be replaced with new-style signs upon issuance of new encroachment permits.

Courtesy signs are to be placed near the beginning of each adoption site on the right shoulder as an advisory that workers may be present on the roadside. The exact location of courtesy signs will be determined by each district's Office of Traffic Safety.

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The larger signs are to be used on freeways. The smaller signs are to be used on conventional highways (two-lane), in coastal zones, on scenic highways, in state parks, or in communities which request smaller signs. If an adoption site encompasses more than one type of highway, the road type where the sign is placed will determine the sign's size.

If signs are to be placed within a state park or recreation area, districts should coordinate the sign size and location with the regional office of the Department of Parks and Recreation.

### Multiple Signs for the Same Group

Adopt-A-Highway signs for litter removal adoptions should be at least two miles apart. Courtesy signs for multiple, contiguous segments held by one permittee should be no closer than four miles in the same direction. When old-style signs are replaced with new-style signs, any existing signs for multiple, contiguous segments recognizing the same adopter will not be replaced.

### Signs of Expired or Cancelled Adoptions

Courtesy signs should remain in place once installed. If a group terminates its commitment, only the recognition panel should be removed. Participants may be given the custom or State-produced panels in recognition of their efforts.

If the courtesy sign is not preprinted with 1-866-ADOPTAHWY, then a overlay panel with the toll free number should be installed on the courtesy sign until the area is once again adopted.



## ORDERING SIGNS

Courtesy sign components and blank recognition panels are ordered by part number directly from a Caltrans-contracted, sign manufacturer. Graphics are added to the blank recognition panels either by Caltrans or by the adopter.

### Standard Recognition Panels\*

Caltrans will provide standard recognition panels (reflective white background with non-reflective black lettering) at no cost to the adopter. Caltrans-produced panels will use the sans-serif lettering style that is designated in the *Standard Highway Signs* book.

Organizational or corporate logos can be added to a standard panel, but the logo must be provided by the adopter at their own cost. Supplied logos must fit within the panel area and have pressure-sensitive, adhesive backing.

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### Custom Recognition Panels\*

Adopters may provide a nonstandard recognition panel at their own cost. Custom panel elements can be supplied as pressure-sensitive adhesive art to be installed by Caltrans, or, a completed panel can be supplied. Caltrans will supply blank recognition panels at no cost to participants who choose the latter option.

## COURTESY SIGN AND RECOGNITION PANEL INSTALLATION

### Courtesy Signs

Adopt-A-Highway courtesy signs shall only be installed by the Department's personnel under the Adopt-A-Highway Program. District coordinators are responsible for submitting sign installation and repair orders to the district sign supervisor. The maximum time from the issuance of an Adopt-A-Highway encroachment permit to installation of a courtesy sign and recognition panel should not exceed four months.

\*All panel elements must be reviewed and approved by the district Adopt-A-Highway coordinator and comply with the requirements set forth on pages 4-7 through 4-14.



## **Recognition Panels**

Recognition panels are usually installed by the Department's personnel under the Adopt-A-Highway Program..

However, Districts may allow the Permittee's contractor to replace (install or remove) the recognition-panel portion of the sign if all of the following conditions have been met:

- Pertinent District personnel (Maintenance, Permits, Traffic Safety, etc.) agree to this practice.
- The activity occurs within a valid Encroachment Permit period.
- Recognition panel replacement is specifically authorized on the contractor's Encroachment Permit.
- The design and content of the panel(s) have been approved by the District Adopt-A-Highway Coordinator.

**Districts may allow the Permittee's contractor to replace (install or remove) the recognition-panel portion of the sign.**

## **DAMAGED OR MISSING SIGN COMPONENTS**

It is important that damaged or missing sign components be replaced or repaired as soon as possible. This includes removing graffiti and replacing signs lost during construction.

### **Custom Panel Replacement**

Caltrans will replace custom panels with standard panels at no cost to the adopter, or, the adopter can purchase new custom panels. The new custom panels will be installed at no cost.

### **Repeated Vandalism**

If an adopter's sign is vandalized more than three times during a two-year permit period or five times during the group's sponsorship, district coordinators may ask the group to replace the damaged or missing sign components at their own cost.

## **SIGNS ON SITES UNDER CONSTRUCTION**

Participants are not permitted to work in their areas during construction. The entire Adopt-A-Highway sign should be removed by Caltrans and then reinstalled upon completion of the project. (See *Attachments* pages 21-3 through 21-5.)



## BASIC RECOGNITION PANEL RULES

### Purpose

Although there is advertising value inherent in the recognition panels, they are not intended to be an advertising medium. Their purpose is to identify and recognize who is providing the adoption service, not what they do, what products they sell, or where they are located.

### Recognition Panel Approval

All panel elements must be reviewed and approved by the district Adopt-A-Highway coordinator. In all circumstances, the content of recognition panel elements is solely determined by Caltrans.

Adopters choosing to provide a custom panel must submit an accurate, scaled, and colored proof of their panel design to the district Adopt-A-Highway coordinator prior to its manufacture. Coordinators must also review the finished custom panel (or pressure-sensitive adhesive artwork) before it is installed.

District coordinators should provide alternative suggestions when rejecting a sponsor's submitted text or design.

### Acceptable Recognition Panel Contents

Recognition panel elements are limited to the name, logo, or both of an adopter. No photographs, product names, slogans, telephone or fax numbers, street addresses, electronic mail or Internet addresses, Ham Radio i.d.'s, directions, or exit ramps are permitted on the panels. Photographs are not permitted. In addition, messages, symbols, and trademarks that resemble any official traffic control device shall not be used.

Organizational or corporate logos are permitted on recognition panels. Logos must be the symbol or trademark commonly used by the organization or business. Logos must be legible to passing motorists and compliant with the color restrictions listed below.

**Recognition panel elements are limited to the name, logo, or both of an adopter.**



## Lettering Size, Style, and Margins

Lettering on the small panel must be a minimum of 2 inches high. Lettering on the large panel must be a minimum of 3 inches high. Larger lettering is permissible and recommended. Margins on the small and large panels must be a minimum of 1 and 2 inches, respectively.

Custom type styles are permitted provided that the lettering is legible and compliant with the color restrictions listed below.

## Color Restrictions

Logos and lettering on recognition panels may include the tasteful use of colors. However, because highly colored panels may distract drivers, the following restrictions apply:

- Recognition panels shall have a white background comprising 50% of the panel.
- The use of red, orange, or yellow (or any combination thereof) for logos and lettering shall not exceed 30% of the entire panel area.
- Fluorescent, neon, reflective, or ‘dayglow’ colors are prohibited.

## Legibility and Safety

Panels that are difficult to read may distract drivers. Coordinators should not approve illegible signs even if the content and color are otherwise acceptable. Reducing the proposed recognition panel design to 1/2” in height will help to determine whether or not the logo and lettering will be legible to passing motorists.

**Coordinators should not approve illegible signs even if the content and color are otherwise acceptable.**





## RECOGNITION PANEL IMAGE GUIDE



### Large Panel

**45" x 21" (945 sq. in.)**

2" margin is required

Image area is 41" x 17"

A maximum of 50% solid color (472.5 sq. in.) is permitted of which no more than 30% (315 sq. in.) can be red, yellow, orange, or any combination thereof.

Minimum Letter Size is 3"



### Small Panel

**30" x 15" (450 sq. in.)**

1" margin is required

Image area is 28" x 13"

A maximum of 50% solid color (225 sq. in.) is permitted of which no more than 30% (150 sq. in.) can be red, yellow, orange, or any combination thereof.

Minimum Letter Size is 2"

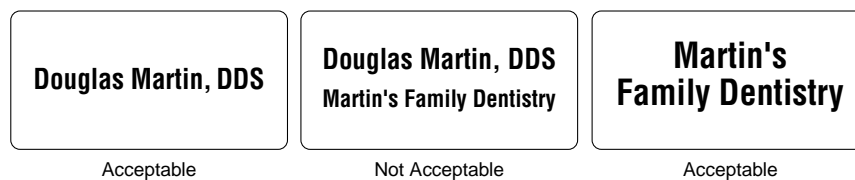


## ADDITIONAL PANEL RESTRICTIONS AND LIMITED EXCEPTIONS

### Panel Rules for Individual Adopters

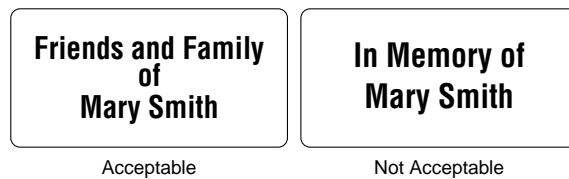
#### Professional Titles

Abbreviations of professional degrees, such as DDS or Ph.D., are acceptable. Panels can recognize an individual or their business, but not both.



#### Memorials

Memorial panels are not permitted because the sign must recognize the person(s) making the contribution. However, “Friends of Mary Jones” or “Family of Mary Jones” would be acceptable.



#### Political Candidates, Elected Officials, and Appointed Officials

Panels for elected officials, appointed officials, or political candidates may not reference the office held or their individual title. In addition, any *logos* on these panels shall not reference the office held or political party.



## Brokers and Agents

Because of the unique nature of their businesses, commodities brokers, real estate agents, and insurance agents may display the *logo* of the corporation they represent in addition to their name. However, the panel *wording* can recognize the individual or their business, but not both.



## Descriptive Terms

If necessary to identify an individual as different from another same-named individual, the panel may display a single, descriptive term. All such terms must be approved on a case-by-case basis.

## Panel Rules for Clubs, Committees, and Organizations

### Community Names

If necessary to identify an organization as different from another same-named organization, the panel may indicate the community name. If an organization can be uniquely identified by a number, such as a troop, club, or post number, then the addition of the community name is not acceptable.



## Staffs of or Committees for, Political Candidates, Elected Officials, and Appointed Officials

Political action committees or campaigns or staffs of elected officials, appointed officials, or political candidates may not reference the office held or individual title. Appropriate recognition may include the elected officials name and/or recognition of their staffs or



volunteers. Examples include “Friends of John Smith,” “John Smith and Friends,” “Staff of John Smith,” etc. In addition, *logos* on these panels shall not reference the office held or political party.



However, a panel displaying the words “Young Republicans” would be acceptable because it does not reference an office held or the title of a political individual. In addition, groups like “Young Republicans” would be considered clubs or organizations, not political action committees.

## Panel Rules for Businesses and Corporations

### Addition of Community Names

Effective November 2001, if necessary to identify a business as different from another same-named business, the recognition panel may indicate the community name. If two same-named business are located in the same community, the panel may indicate the street name (not the address) of the business providing the service. Use of both the community name and street name is not permitted.



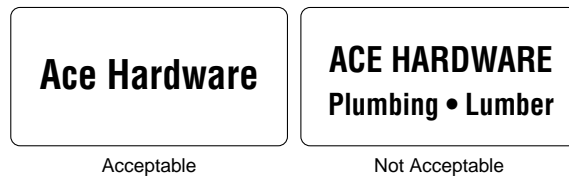
### Business Names That Include Community or Street Names

Community or street names that are an established and integral part of the participant’s business or company name are acceptable. Examples include “Sacramento Signs” and “First Street Pharmacy.”



### Business Names That Include Products

Product names that are an established and integral part of the participant's business or company name are usually acceptable. Business names such as "Burger King" or "Ace Hardware" would be acceptable. Recognition of alcohol or tobacco products is not permitted under any circumstance, but recognition of tourist-related winery facilities is acceptable. Recognition of businesses that sell pornographic products will not be permitted.



### Panel Rules for Web-Based Organizations and Businesses

Entities that operate exclusively on the Internet and whose legal business or organizational name is the same as their web address' domain name, may be permitted to display their domain name on their recognition panel. For example, AutoMall.com would be acceptable panel text because:

- AutoMall.com is an Internet-based business. (There are no physical, AutoMall car lots.)
- It is the domain name in the web address of their home page.
- AutoMall.com has submitted a business license proving that their business name is the same as their domain name.

### Verification of Business or Organization Name

Sole proprietorship and partnerships must submit a copy of their business license along with their encroachment permit application as proof of their identical domain name/business name. Corporations and "S" corporations must submit copies of their articles of incorporation along with their encroachment permit application. Fictitious business name statements cannot be used for name verification.



## **Verification of Web Site Contents**

Coordinators must carefully examine web sites to ensure that they operate exclusively on the Internet. If the site lists the street address of a meeting or store location, then the organization would be disqualified from using their domain name as panel text.

Coordinator's must also examine all web sites for appropriate content. All previously-mentioned product name restrictions apply to domain names. In addition domain names of web sites containing sexually-explicit text or images will not be permitted as panel text.

## **Panel Rules for Telephone-Based Organizations and Businesses**

Entities that operate exclusively over the telephone and whose legal business or organizational name is the same as their phone number, may be permitted to display their phone number on their recognition panel. Such entities will be examined on a case-by-case basis and will be subject to the same verification rules and restrictions as web-based entities.

## **WHEN IN DOUBT ABOUT A PANEL'S ACCEPTABILITY**

Determining whether or not panel contents and design meet requirements can be difficult. If in doubt, coordinators can:

- Refer to these guidelines.
- Ask for a copy of the company's business license to verify business name. (Fictitious business name statements cannot be used for name verification.)
- Check the company's web site, business card, phone book listing, or store sign to verify business name and trademarked logo.
- Cut and paste proposed panel colors into sections to verify a 50% white background and 30% combined use of red, orange, and yellow.
- Reduce an image of the panel to a height of 1/2 inch to check for legibility.
- Seek a second opinion from your traffic department, other district Adopt-A-Highway coordinators, or headquarters Adopt-A-Highway coordinators.



## **REPLACEMENT OF NON-COMPLAINT RECOGNITION PANELS**

District Adopt-A-Highway coordinators may require immediate replacement of non-compliant recognition panels. If immediate replacement is not required, non-compliant panels shall be replaced when the Permittee applies for a new encroachment permit. Non-compliant panels that are replaced during the current permit period due to theft, damage, or vandalism will be subject to these *Guidelines*.

